

CA29N
SD90
-2002



MUNICIPAL POLITICS: **WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU**

ONTARIO ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S ISSUES
880 Bay Street, 5th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N3
Telephone: (416) 965-5824

THE ISSUES

Employment

MUNICIPALITIES

THE FACT IS:

There are over 140,000 full-time municipal employees in Ontario. Only about 25% of these are women.

ASK:

Will you support the implementation of affirmative action employment programs to increase the number of women employed full time by municipalities?

Will you review the appointments made by your municipality to its agencies and special purpose bodies to ensure adequate representation of women, including minority women and women with disabilities?

THE FACT IS:

Women who work for municipalities are segregated into traditional jobs such as clerical, public health and social services.

ASK:

Will you promote the employment of women into non-traditional areas such as fire-fighting, policing, labouring?

Will you work towards implementing equal pay for work of equal value among all municipal employees?

SCHOOL BOARDS

THE FACT IS:

There are approximately just over 100,000 public school teachers in Ontario employed by 126 school boards.

Women make up 70% of elementary school teachers and 35% of teachers in secondary schools. However, they hold *less than 15%* of all positions of responsibility.

ASK:

Will you support the implementation of affirmative action programs for women, including minority women and those with disabilities?

THE FACT IS:

Non-teaching staff (i.e. school bus drivers, caretakers, librarians, secretaries) make up nearly 15% of the employees of a school board.

ASK:

Will you work towards implementing equal pay for work of equal value between teaching and non-teaching staff?

Services

MUNICIPALITIES

THE FACT IS:

There are 838 municipalities in Ontario. Each municipality elects officials who make policy and executive decisions regarding services and programs. Many services are legislated provincially but delivered by the municipality, such as housing, transportation and childcare.

Recreation/physical fitness

ASK:

How will you ensure that municipal recreation programs provide equal sports opportunities for women and men?

Childcare

ASK:

How will you ensure that your municipality takes maximum advantage of the childcare funding made available by the federal and provincial levels of government?

Will you then undertake a review of the salary levels of childcare workers in your municipality?

Will you encourage new developments to provide workplace childcare?

Will you support the establishment of childcare centres in available space in schools?

Housing

ASK:

Will you ensure that your municipality takes advantage of federal and provincial funding in order to provide housing for women with special needs, particularly short-term housing for women in crisis and long-term rental housing for single mothers?

Public Violence

ASK:

What will you do to ensure that all women victims of violence receive adequate services?

Will you work towards providing adequate street lighting and better street design to inhibit violence against women?

Will you ensure that policing services in your municipality are sufficient to handle domestic and public violence?

Transportation

ASK:

Will you examine local transportation services to ensure that the work day is not lengthened by infrequent transportation services?

Economic Development

ASK:

Will you ensure that municipal contracts are only given to those companies who demonstrate that they provide equal opportunity for their own employees.

SCHOOL BOARDS

THE FACT IS:

There are 126 school boards (49 of which are separate school boards) in Ontario. These boards are autonomous bodies and their elected officials are responsible for policy and executive decisions regarding delivery of services and programs in their school area.

Similar to municipalities, some services offered by school boards are controlled locally, while others are legislated by the provincial government although delivered by the school boards.

For instance, special education programs are legislated provincially, but the delivery is provided by the school boards. The Education Amendment Act requires school boards to provide "appropriate" education for children determined to have learning exceptionalities. These exceptionalities range from determination of giftedness to that of learning disabilities.

Special Education

ASK:

Will you ensure that the legislation which comes into effect September 1985, is in fact properly implemented in your school boards?

Will you also ensure that students with other "special needs" such as teenage mothers, adult students with literacy gaps, have access to specialized programs to complete their appropriate school credits?

Curriculum

ASK:

Will you ensure that all school materials are reviewed for sex bias and promote teaching materials that provide a balanced view of women's participation in society?

Will you ensure that sex education materials are available to male and female students?

What will you do to ensure that young women are encouraged to study maths and sciences?

Fitness and Sports

ASK:

Will you ensure that female and male students receive an equal level of resources for sports programs including school team sports?

Career Counselling

ASK:

What steps will you take to ensure that female students receive adequate employment and life skills counselling?

Childcare

ASK:

Will you support the establishment of childcare centres in available space in schools?



3 1761 11546593 2

REFERENCES

Women in Decision Making,

Women and Economic Development Committee,
Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council,
221 Bay Street, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 5N1

"Getting Political – *How to Run for City Hall*", by Suzanne Zwarun.
Chatelaine, Vol. 58, No. 7, July, 1985.

"Women at City Hall – *A Chatelaine Status Report*",

by Suzanne Zwarun.

Chatelaine, Vol. 58, #5, May, 1975.

"Choosing tomorrow's trustee – *WTA Action Kit for Municipal elections, November 1985*".

Federation of Women Teacher's Association of Ontario,
1260 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2B8

Women and Local Government . . . a beginning.

Available from Ontario Government Bookstore,
880 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1N8

Alberta Municipal Elections 1983 – The ASWAC Handbook.

Alberta Status of Women Committee,
P.O. Box 1573, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N7

Women and Environments,

Centre for Urban and Community Studies,
455 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2G8

Municipal World,

360 Talbot Street, St. Thomas, Ontario